

2-3-16

To Whom It May Concern:

Hi, my name is Andrea Anderson; I am currently working on my teaching credential for Social Sciences. During my perusal of History and Social Sciences/HSS Framework Second Field Review Draft, in the grade 8 section, I had some comments and concerns that I wish to convey.

The HSS Framework and Second Field Review presented useful points for teachers to consider when instructing their students on U.S. history and geography for grade 8. The draft document clarifies how important it is for teachers to consider both literacy and historical instruction, in the classroom. In the classroom, students need to be active learners, who investigate history, in order to improve their skills as students, in literacy and history, through class activities, discussions, or assignments that highlight historical skills, such as comparison, historiography, periodization, interpretation with evidence, and causes/consequences. I felt that the HSS draft framework included productive focus questions or stated great examples for student activities that addressed some of these skills, such as the debates, speeches, period newspapers, or other assignments to engage student investigation and learning. Furthermore, I liked how the draft presented more open-ended focus questions, which students can use to focus their readings or analysis of historical agents/people or topics, however, I do have some concerns, in regards to, the focus questions.

Although, I approve of having open-ended focus questions to have students learn through active learning or investigative research. I think some revisions would be useful to be more inclusive of other groups and present a better understanding of how society reacted to diverse groups of people, in various time frames. For example, the question on line 7, could be revised from "Who is considered an American?" to "Who are considered Americans and who are not?", in order to be more inclusive of other groups living in North America, such as Native Americans. Another question on line 38 concerned me, I think another question should be added, such as "Who did the Framers believe possess "natural rights" in North America?", to address the founding fathers attitudes of hypocrisy or exclusion towards groups, such as Native Americans or African Americans. Although the concept of "natural rights" was developed, it did not apply to all groups of people, which should be pointed out to students to support their critical thinking skills and understanding of cultural attitudes/perspectives in various time periods, such as the American Revolutionary period and today.

Furthermore, I feel that certain concepts or terms within the frameworks should be revised or be made more specific like the old California content standards for Social Sciences. For example, the term "region" that addresses geographic locations, in the following focus question: "What was family life like in each region?", needs to be made more specific to highlight what areas (cities, states, or countries) that the teachers needs to address with students. I felt that the HSS draft framework needs to adapt or be more inclusive of geographical instruction.

I hope that some of my comments provide some useful insight. All in all, the HSS Draft Framework provided useful/general focus questions to address historical people, events, and ideas during the early colonial period to the Industrial Revolutionary period. In

addition, I liked how the HSS Draft Framework also provided examples on how to provide instruction for topics, such as the Civil War, to better engage students in investigating multiple sources (excerpts from newspapers, speeches, or etc.), class discussions, or partner/group activities. Thank you for your time and hard work in preparing documents to support the classroom instruction and academic development of students.

Sincerely,  
Andrea Anderson